

## Defence of the Faith

### SCIENCE PROVES THE BIBLE.

"Scientific confirmations of the Old Testament" was the subject of an interesting sermon by Dr. George Frederick Wright, of Oberlin College, before the congregation of the New York Avenue Presbyterian church. He said:

"The more you examine a fictitious story the greater will its discrepancies appear. The more a true story is studied the clearer will be its claims to confidence. In these last days both science and history are confirming, as never before, the statements of the Old Testament.

"It was a bold venture to preface the Bible with a picture of the progress of creation from the beginning of things to the creation of man. But modern science has no occasion to criticise that brief but magnificent introduction. It is confirmed rather than contradicted by science. The story of the flood seems less improbable than it did before our knowledge of the glacial period and of its connection with human history. Science now shows that the early history of man was interrupted by numerous deluges connected with the close of the glacial period.

"The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the crossing of the Jordan by Joshua's host, and the fall of the walls of Jericho are easily credible now that we know the geology of the valley of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. It is an earthquake region where the internal fires can easily be made to burst forth, and loosely built city walls made to topple to the ground. The crossing of the Red Sea, likewise, is now easily explained as made possible by the effect of the wind, which, it is said, the Lord caused to blow at the opportune time. These are all mediate miracles, in which God made use of natural forces to accomplish superhuman results. The conformity of these accounts with the natural conditions involved establishes their truth beyond reasonable doubt.

"In a similar manner are other statements of the Old Testament supported by historical investigations. The story in Genesis of Amraphel's expedition from Babylonia to Palestine, in the time of Abraham, is now confirmed by numerous discoveries made in the Euphrates valley. Amraphel was the same as Hammurabi, whose laws have recently been discovered.

"Hannathon, the place mentioned in the text, was not otherwise known until a few years ago, when a reference to it was found in the Tel el Amarna tablets discovered in Egypt and containing an extensive correspondence carried on in the fifteenth century before Christ between the king of Egypt and his vassals in Palestine and Syria. The Hittites, too, were declared by many to be a mythical people until they were found to be frequently referred to in these same tablets. Now the sculptures and remains of that remarkable people are found in abundance.

"Darius the Mede, said by Daniel to have reigned a year in Babylon after its capture by Cyrus, has also

been regarded by many as a mythical person. But within the past year mathematical calculations concerning a total eclipse of the sun in that region make corrections in the accepted chronology of the period, which practically prove that he was no less a personage than Astyages, the last of the Median kings. And so we might go on indefinitely.

"The Old Testament bears the closest examination and cross-questioning, and comes out of it all with the increased confidence of sound-minded critics. It is invaluable history, revealing the waywardness of man and the mingled goodness and severity of God in dealing with him."

Washington, D. C.

### THE BOOK'S UNITY.

The unity of the Bible is a feature which all who reason must recognize. First of all is its outward unity. Though made up of sixty-six separate books, it is one book. So accordant are they, in all their differences, that the world has come, all unconsciously, to recognize and accept them as one. It has actually, by popular usage, converted the earlier plural Greek name for the collection into a singular noun, "the books" into "the book," its unconscious but willing tribute to their unity. The very word "Bible" means "book," not many books!

This unity appears next in that development which one part shows out of other parts, not in the way of mere suggestion or in the progress of thought, but in the gradual but certain unfolding of great principles and a glorious scheme of grace. The books of the Bible, when put in chronological order, as they should always be put and as every careful student will certainly investigate them, show the definite unfolding of a plan until that plan was complete and applied and set forth in its fullness to the world.

It appears next in that marvellous agreement, though the several parts be so diverse, in the general thought, expression, and purpose of the books. No one can carefully study them without feeling in some indefinable way that they emanated from a common source, that they are actuated by a common motive, that they unfold a common thought. The evident unity of design makes itself so felt that it carries the thoughtful reader clear over certain difficulties here and there which in any other volume might justly be regarded as fatal to its integrity. The history of the Bible, as one book, for ages and through all the severest tests of criticism, scholarship, and use, is the proof of the quiet yet invincible hold of this book as one upon the minds and hearts of men in all ages.

Better never to be born than not be born again.

Infancy is beautiful only in its time. To remain an infant is a calamity.

It is better to grow straight than strong; better still to grow straight and strong.